

# Class Rank Study Group

Report to the School Committee  
September 21, 2016

# Members of the Committee

- Liza Trombley, Director of English
- Nga Huynh, Director of School Counseling
- Heather Thompson, Latin
- Matt Brown and Michael Carpentier, Social Science
- Jennifer Cuddy, Chemistry
- Kathy Floyd and Susie Eriole, School Counselors
- Tracy Calabresi, ITAMS
- Todd Bazydlo, Principal

# Essential Question

The committee specifically looked to determine how admissions offices use class rank in granting student admission to college/university, and to further determine if reporting class rank could be detrimental to the admissions success of SHS students.

# Methodology

- Past and current class rank process
- Investigated issues associated with reporting rank
- Reviewed the practices of 30 comparable public and private high schools
- Researched and contacted college admissions offices use of class rank and views on rank
- Garnered student, staff, parent information and feedback

# Reporting Class Rank History

- Prior to 2006
  - students had exact numerical rank
- 2007- Present
  - change to percentile rank

# Issues with Class Rank

- Colleges use rank to compare students from different schools
- Assumption that all schools are equal in rigor, programming and student performance
- Rank can be used a cursory sorting mechanism

# High Schools who do not report rank....

Acton-Boxborough Regional (2012)

Andover (2009)

Concord-Carlisle Regional (1997)

Dover-Sherborn Regional (2002)

Duxbury (2006)

Hingham (2006)

Hopkinton (1999)

Lincoln-Sudbury Regional (2004)

Nashoba Regional (2013)

Newton North (2011)

Newton South (2010)

Wachusett Regional (2015)

Wayland (2011)

Wellesley (2004)

Westborough (2006)

Westford Academy (2007)

Weston (2003)

Westwood (2003)

# High Schools continued...

Of the top ten schools in Massachusetts according to *US News and World Report*(2015-2016), the following do not report class rank:

#1 Sturgis Charter Public School

#2 Boston-Latin School

#4 Advanced Math and Science Academy Charter School

#5 Lexington High School

#6 Belmont High School

#9 Dover-Sherborn Regional High School

#10 Sharon High School

# College Admissions Viewpoints

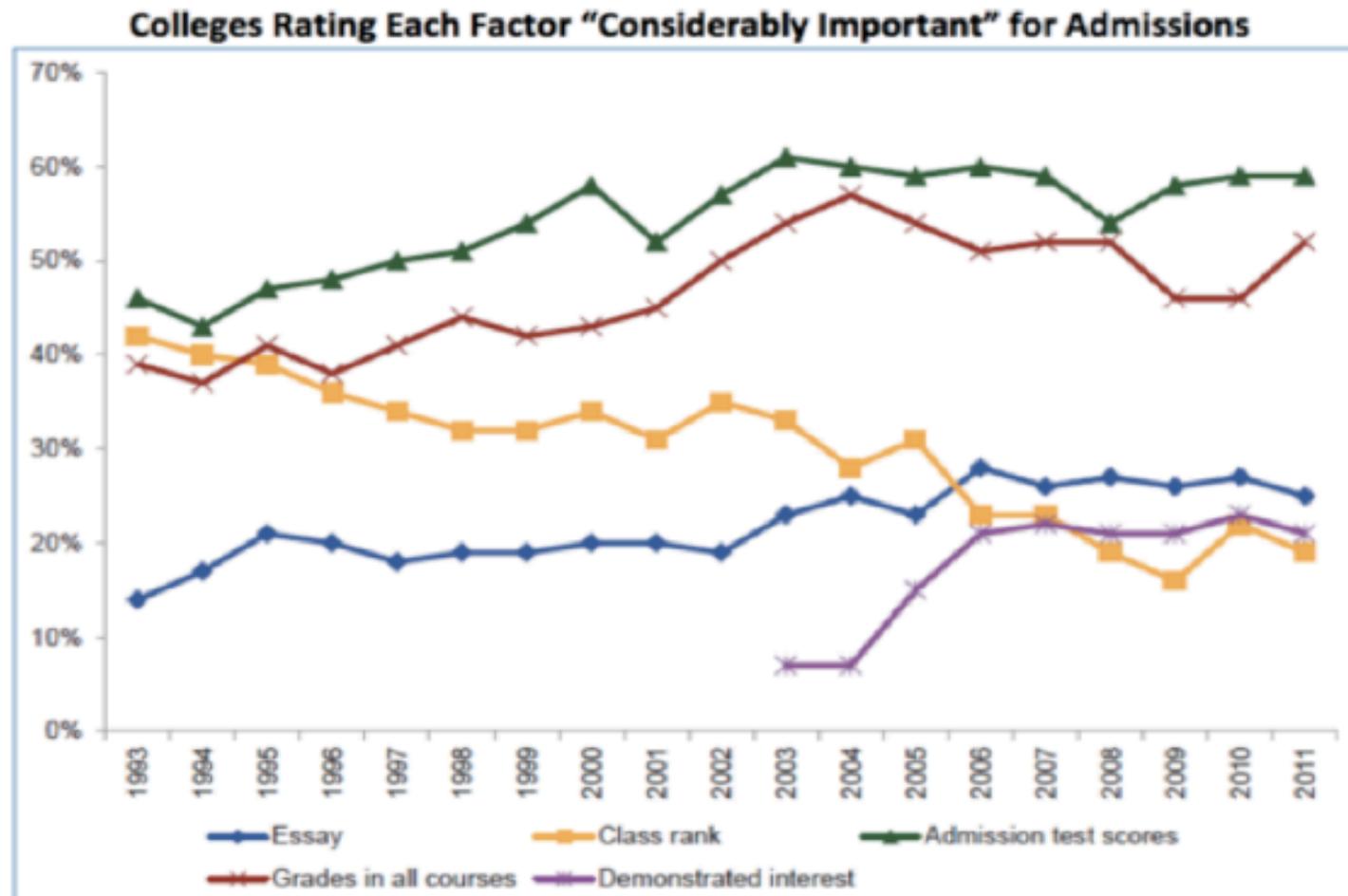
- Omitting class rank does not have negative impact on student acceptance
- Transcripts are the most important factor in admissions
- The majority of colleges and universities will focus on other elements of a student's profile when class rank is not provided

# National Reports

- According to the annual surveys of colleges conducted by NACAC, the importance of class rank in college admissions has declined significantly since 1993.
- The most recent State of College Admission survey released by NACAC indicates that class rank is of “considerable importance” to only 15.2% colleges in 2013, down from 42% in 1993.

# College Admissions

Table 2 Taken from Hanover Research's article "The Changing Role of Class Rank in College Admissions"



Source: [NACAC](#)

# College Admissions

| College/University        | Is class rank required for admission?* | Notes  |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Cornell University        | No                                     | 72.5% of admitted students did not provide rank  |
| University of Vermont     | No                                     | 63% of admitted students did not provide rank  |
| Brandeis University       | No                                     | Well over half of admitted students did not provide rank   |
| Columbia University       | No                                     | 'Columbia uses a holistic review process when evaluating applicants for admission; admission to Columbia is not based on a simple formula of grades and test scores.'    |
| University of Connecticut | Like to see it                         | Rigor of transcript is used first, then grades in those courses. Some kind of grade distribution is helpful for determining scholarship and Honors College qualification |
| Brown University          | Like to see it                         | If rank is not provided, a grade distribution chart is beneficial and would be used when reviewing an applicant  |

# College Admissions

|                           |                |  |
|---------------------------|----------------|--|
| Boston College            | No             | Rank is only looked at in the context of that student's school. 'Plenty of our applicants come from schools that do not provide rank'. Rigor of transcript and grades are paramount. Test scores next. |
| Assumption College        | No             | 60% of admitted students did not provide rank  |
| Northeastern University   | No             | Performance in high school is the most deciding factor-a competitive schedule with good grades. Test scores next.  |
| College of the Holy Cross | Like to see it | Prefer to have some idea of where a student stands in their class.   |
| WPI                       | No             | Rigor of curriculum is preferred; could be considered for scholarship if student is #1 or #2 in class-reported from the counselor is sufficient. <input type="checkbox"/>                              |

# Feedback from constituents

- School Council
- Faculty Forum
- Student Survey
- Parent presentation

# Student Feedback

## Should SHS Eliminate the Reporting of Class Rank to Colleges and Universities Beginning in the 2016-2017 School Year?

|                                       | "Yes" | "No"  | Percent Participating |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-----------------------|
| <b>Class of 2019<br/>(Freshmen)</b>   | 73.2% | 26.8% | 90.1%                 |
| <b>Class of 2018<br/>(Sophomores)</b> | 69.2% | 30.8% | 88.1%                 |
| <b>Class of 2017<br/>(Juniors)</b>    | 74.9% | 25.1% | 82.8%                 |
| <b>Class of 2016<br/>(Seniors)</b>    | 59.6% | 40.4% | 70.3%                 |
| <b>Total</b>                          | 69.7% | 30.3% | 83.0%                 |

## Moving forward.....

- Shrewsbury High School will no longer report students' class rank to college/university.

# Rationale

- Reporting limits our students' opportunities for college acceptance
  - Some colleges and programs use class rank as a cutoff
- Admissions will now delve deeper into our students' applications
- Addresses student social and emotional issues
  - Decrease competitiveness
  - Allow students to explore course offerings based on interest

# Valedictorian and Salutatorian

- No change to current practice
- Top two highest weighted GPAs
- 8 Consecutive semesters
- Determined at the conclusion of Quarter 3 of Senior year

**Questions?**